



Handwriting Progression

Rocket Phonics

EYFS - Year 6



Handwriting

Good handwriting is an essential skill in the quest to spell and write fluently, confidently and competently. A joined handwriting style links kinaesthetic

'muscle memory' with the relationship between the sounds of our speech and the letter shapes, letter groupings and whole written words. The ability to write neatly can raise self-esteem and provides a motivating factor in the production of written work.

We have high expectations of handwriting in our schools and it is taught using a traditional cursive script. The teaching of the print form begins in Foundation Stage, with joined handwriting taught from Year 2 onwards. From Year 2, we teach Rocket Phonics Cursive Handwriting.

The Teaching of Handwriting

Rocket Phonics cursive handwriting is an all-joined style with two main joins – a diagonal line which starts with the pencil point on the writing line, and a smile join. Through teaching, we demonstrate the two main joins by drawing two separate squares sitting on a writing line. In one square, we draw a straight line from the bottom left corner to the top right corner to form the diagonal line join. In the other square, we draw a curved line from the top left corner to the top right corner to form the smile join. The joins are very important for spacing letters evenly and children need to understand that there must be a clear join between all of the letter shapes.

We teach the traditional tripod pencil grip. Children are taught to think carefully about which part of each letter is the letter shape and which part is the join. At the start of each handwriting focus lesson, children practise forming lower case letters as discrete shapes, starting with the pencil point on the writing line to form the diagonal lead-in stroke. The letters are grouped into handwriting families with similar formations. A lead-in stroke at the beginning of every word in lower case is particularly dyslexia friendly. This style is not taught by writing any long letter strings of the same shape letter.

Children are taught to think carefully about the letters they write and the join each letter needs in whole words. This engagement with the mechanics of the writing style, instead of just mindlessly copying strings of letter shapes and words, results in children proceeding rapidly to join any words they wish to write independently. Some children may be able to convert to this style almost immediately. The diagonal line join softens as the writer becomes increasingly fluent. The style is taught as separate letters at first– not letter strings– and all the letters with their diagonal lead-in joins are taught to proficiency and automaticity before starting to join the letters into words.

It is preferable to provide opportunities for intensive daily practice rather than one lesson per week. Handwriting is, therefore, to be taught on a daily basis and modelled by all staff when they are modelling writing for children, marking work and on display. All staff should have the Rocket Phonic font installed on their laptop so that they can use the font for display and labelling purposes, although a range of fonts can and should be used.

Pencil Grip and Posture



We teach the traditional tripod grip. To do this, children place their thumb and forefinger on the bottom of the painted part of the pencil (not on the cone-shaped end part) with the pencil across the back of the hand. The middle finger supports the pencil to complete the tripod grip.

We emphasise the need for good posture while children are writing. The writing hand should rest lightly on the paper below the words being written so that the words are not obscured. The paper may be tilted slightly to increase comfort and the child's non-writing hand used to keep the paper secure.

Tripod pencil grip

Here is some useful information about how to teach the tripod pencil grip (commonly recognised as the most effective way to hold a pencil).

1. Use a frog toy (or a picture of a frog) to show young learners the shape of the frog's bowed back legs.
2. Show children how to use their thumb and forefinger to create a shape which looks similar to the frog's back bendy legs.
3. Pinch the pencil, just above the cone end, and use the middle finger as a supporting 'log under'.
4. To make this skill child-friendly say, *Put your froggy legs (thumb and forefinger) on the bottom of the painted part of the pencil (not*
- on the cone shaped end part), *with the pencil across the frog's back (back of the hand), then put the log under the frog (middle finger supporting the pencil to complete the tripod grip).*
5. Emphasise the need for good sitting posture.
6. The 'writing hand' should rest lightly on the paper below the words being written, so that the words are not obscured.
7. The paper may be tilted slightly to the right (for right-handers) or to the left (for left-handers).
8. Use the frog toy or picture of a frog when you need to remind children about holding their pencil correctly.

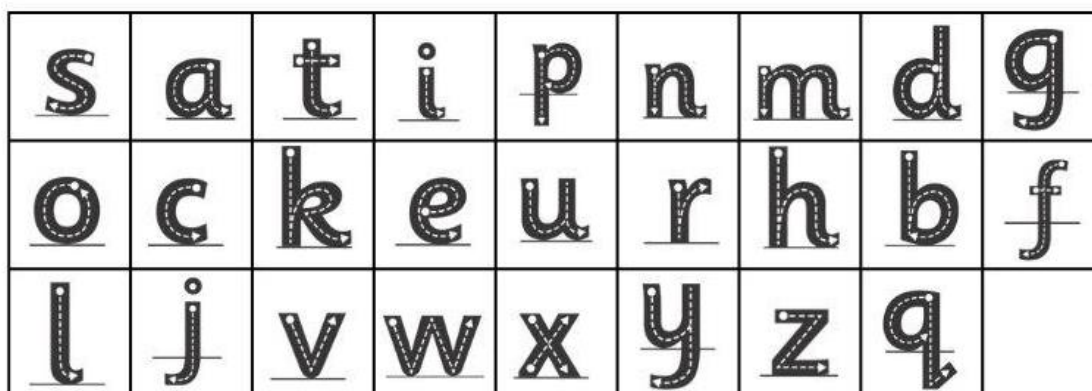
Modelling of Handwriting

It is recommended that all teachers and supporting adults who write on boards and mark work should use the school's handwriting style consistently. All staff in our school model handwriting: if the children are writing in print, the adults write in print. If the children are at the stage of writing in joined writing, the adults should write in the school's joined handwriting.

Print Formation

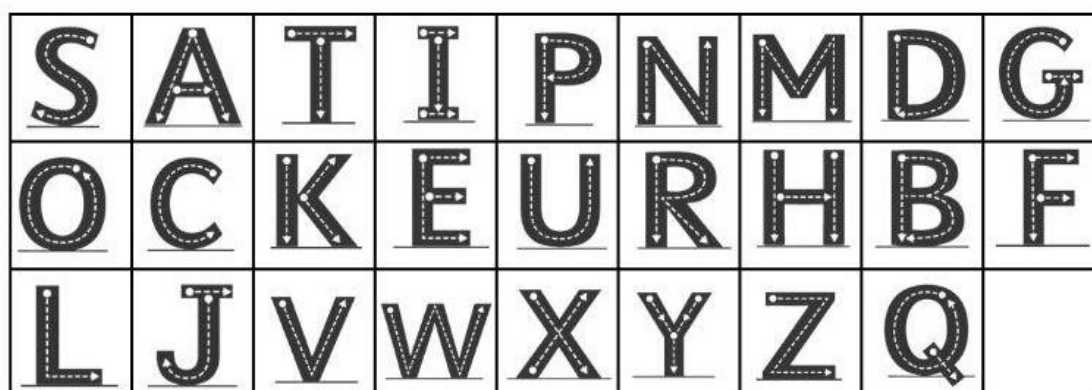
Children will be taught the print formation of lower-case and capital letters, with clear start and finish points. Rocket Phonics letter scripts will be used to support the correct

modelling to children. There are scripts for both lower-case and capital letters.



Capital Letters

All capital letters are tall and sit on the writing line. Capital letters are the same style whether writing in print or joined handwriting. When writing capital letters, always start in the air. With joined handwriting, start a sentence with a capital letter at the beginning of the first word, then leave a small gap before starting the next letter of the word on the line.



Cursive Formation

The style is taught as separate letters at first– not letter strings– and all the letters with their joins are taught to proficiency and automaticity before starting to join the letters into words. It is important to teach the letters which start like the letter c to fluency before the other letters. For the subsequent letters, describe and model how to form each letter paying careful attention to the description of how to form the letter (where to start, the route to take and the finish point of the formation) as well as the orientation on the line (size and position on the line in relation to other letters).

Phase	Autumn	Spring	Summer
FS1	Focus: print formation of lower-case and capital letters In nursery, children will begin to write some lower-case and some capital letters accurately. → Gross motor-skill development through climbing, swinging, messy play and parachute games will support large muscle coordination. → Fine motor-skill activities, such as using scissors, learning to sew, eating with cutlery, using small brushes for painting and pencils for drawing will support small muscle coordination. → Children will know the language of direction ('up', 'down', 'round', 'back', etc). Effective pencil grip will be introduced: Tripod pencil grip. When forming letters, the starting point and direction are more important at this stage than the size or position of the letter on a line.		
FS2	Focus: print formation of lower-case and capital letters: In reception, children will be taught the print formation of lower-case and capital letters, with clear start and finish points. Rocket Phonics letter scripts will be used to support the correct modelling to children. There are scripts for both lower-case and capital letters. All individual letter formations are taught by the end of the Spring term. Early Learning Goals: → Fine Motor Skills: Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases → Writing: Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.		
	Autumn Term: Children begin to form letters correctly with support	Spring Term: Most taught letters will be formed correctly.	Summer Term: Most taught letters will be formed correctly and will sit on the line.
	Autumn 1: s a t i p n m d g o c k Autumn 2: e u r h b f l	Spring 1: j v w x y z q Spring 2: consolidation of letters	Continue to consolidate letter formation with letters sitting on the line.

KS1 : Year 1	Focus: print formation of lower-case and capital letters: In year 1, children will consolidate their knowledge of the correct formation of lower-case and capital letters. Children should become increasingly confident at forming these letters correctly, including their size and position on the line.		
	Autumn 1: c C a A d D s S g G o O qu Q f F l L t T h H b B k K r R Autumn 2: n N m M p P i l j J u U y Y v V w W x X z Z e E	Spring 1: c C a A d D s S g G o O qu Q f F l L t T h H b B k K r R and words with 'A' and 'E' digraphs Spring 2: n N m M p P i l j J u U y Y v V w W x X z Z e E and words with 'E', 'I' and 'O' digraphs or trigraphs	Summer 1: c C a A d D s S g G o O qu Q f F l L t T h H b B k K r R and words with 'U', oo, ar, or, ur, ie, er, oi, oy, air, ng digraphs Summer 2: n N m M p P i l j J u U y Y v V w W x X z Z e E and words with er, wh, ph, oul, au, aw, ch, sh, ck, th, ce, ci, cy, ge, gi, gy, ou, ea, a, al, ear, eer and ere digraphs and trigraphs.
KS1: Year 2	Focus: cursive formation of lower-case letter and consolidation of capital letters From Year 2, children will begin to learn Rocket Phonics cursive handwriting. This is an all-joined style with two main joins – a diagonal line which starts with the pencil point on the writing line, and a smile join. In Year 2, the children will be taught the pre-cursive entry and exit strokes so that they will be ready to join their handwriting in Year 3. Though they will not be taught explicitly to join their letters, some children may start to join them naturally. Teachers should ensure that when this happens, these joins are correct. Children will become increasingly confident at forming lower-case letters correctly, including their size and position on the line. Capital letters will be consolidated with children using capital letters to start a sentence and for proper-nouns. When a capital letter is at the start of a word, children will leave a small gap before starting the next letter of the word on the line. In Year 2, all letters are taught, and consolidated in 6 weekly blocks through the Rocket Phonics programme. This introduces all cursive joins and provides time to consolidate and practise. Each half term, teachers should ensure that children are able to form the following letters correctly including lead ins for joins.		
	Autumn 1: c C a A d D s S g G o O qu Q f F l L t T h H b B k K r R Autumn 2: n N m M p P i l j J u U y Y v V w W x X z Z e E	Spring 1: c C a A d D s S g G o O qu Q f F l L t T h H b B k K and Common Exception Words Spring 2: r R n N m M p P i l j J u U y Y v V w W x X z Z e E and Common Exception Words	Summer 1: c C a A d D s S g G o O qu Q f F l L t T h H b B k K and Common Exception Words Summer 2: r R n N m M p P i l j J u U y Y v V w W x X z Z e E and Common Exception Words

LKS2	Focus: pupils will focus on ensuring their letter formation is secure and joins are consistent During LKS2, pupils will start to join their letters building on the precursive entry and exit strokes taught in Year 2. Rocket Phonics cursive handwriting is an all-joined style with two main joins – a diagonal line which starts with the pencil point on the writing line, and a smile join. Children will become increasingly confident in using these joins between different letter types (e.g. letters with ascenders or descenders). Children will become increasingly confident at forming lower-case letters correctly, including their size and position on the line.		
	Autumn 1: → Recap letter formation → Patterns → Diagonal join to r n m → Diagonal join to i and u	Spring 1: → Diagonal join to v w → Diagonal join to z e → Diagonal join from b p s → Diagonal join from g j y → Diagonal join from q x z → Joining words with diagonal joins	Summer 1: → Horizontal join to b and t → Horizontal join to d and g → Horizontal join to e → Joining words → Punctuation focus → Joining Words
	Autumn 2: → Diagonal join to l h k → Diagonal join to a c o → Joining words with diagonal join → Diagonal join to s d g → Diagonal join to p j y → Diagonal join to f b t	Spring 2: → Horizontal join to r n m → Horizontal join to i u → Horizontal join to l h k → Horizontal join to a c o → Horizontal join to v and w → Horizontal join to p and y	Summer 2: → Joining from r to straight letters → Joining to f → Joining from f, g, j, y, to straight letters → Joining from f, g, j, y, to round letters → Joining difficult double letters → Joining letter strings with r
UKS2	Focus: pupils will focus on maintaining a consistent and fluent style, maintaining legibility over sustained pieces of writing: During UKS2, pupils will continue to consolidate a cursive handwriting style. They will practise maintaining legibility when writing at speed. Pupils will continue to practise handwriting through writing more sustained passages of writing.		
	Autumn 1: → Recap → Compound words → Prefixes Autumn 2: → Joining direct speech → Fluent handwriting / Fluent joining → Clear letter shapes → Consistent letter size → Checking position	Spring 1: → Checking spacing → Parallel downstrokes → Parallel ascenders → Parallel descenders → Fluent joining in longer words → Word and line spacing Spring 2: → Joining prefixes → Joining suffixes → Writing fluency → Joining for speed	Summer 1: → Finding your writing speed → Practising for speed → Slanting for speed → Speed for purpose → Taking notes → Check your writing speed Summer 2: → Practising even loops → Slanting for style → Your personal style → Printing for presentation

		→ Fast and legible handiwriting → Tools and tips for speed	→ Block capitals on forms → Your best handwriting
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